

TITLE: Hope Grows Here: Supporting health for cancer survivors through gardening and nutrition education

AUTHOR(S): Hannah Woods, Candace Russo, Emily Ho

PRESENTER(S): Hannah Woods, Candace Russo

STUDENT SUBMISSION: Yes

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Program developers, program evaluators, researchers

ABSTRACT: Cancer survivors face health disparities upon the conclusion of treatment, such as diminished physical and mental health status and decreased quality of life. This study's aim is to determine the strengths, limitations, and possible suggestions for improvement in a mentored gardening intervention to address these health disparities and improve the overall quality of life of survivors. Based on cancer survivorship needs and guidelines, and the successes of other mentored gardening interventions, the 2021 project Hope Grows Here (HGH) adapted the format and methodology of a previous mentored gardening program (Harvest for Health). Subjects (n=11) were provided the supplies to begin their own garden plots, then they participated in a four-week basic gardening class, then a four-month mentored gardening program. In a one-year follow-up to HGH, original subjects were invited to participate in a focus group and discuss participant perceptions of HGH, sustained gardening among participants, and thoughts about HGH successes and shortcomings. The information gathered could indicate whether HGH could be adapted to support cancer survivors physical and social health needs more fully, and how to best implement the program in future iterations.

OBJECTIVE(S): Identify suggestions for improvement of future iterations of Hope Grows Here, a mentored gardening intervention for cancer survivors.
